

The IDVA Update

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Governor Kernan Signs Increased Tax Deductions for Disabled Vets

It was with great difficulty that the Indiana General Assembly finally managed to pass property tax relief for service-connected disabled veterans. Nine days of partisan wrangling had everyone wondering if anything would be accomplished.

The new tax law is a big change increasing the deduction granted to service-connected disabled veterans by 108%.

The new tax code one will be \$12,480 off the assessed value of the real property.

The requirements for tax code 1 are:

- (1) the individual served in the military or naval forces of the United States for at least ninety (90) days;
- (2) the individual received an honorable discharge;
- (3) the individual either:
 - (A) is totally disabled; or
 - (B) is at least sixty-two (62) years old and has a disability of at least ten percent (10%); and
- (4) the individual's disability is evidenced by:

- (A) a pension certificate or an award of compensation issued by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs; or

- (B) a certificate of eligibility issued to the individual by the Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs after that Department has determined that the individual's disability qualifies the individual to receive a deduction under this section

Tax code 2 will increase to \$24,960 off the assessed value of the real property and the requirements are:

- (1) the individual served in the military or naval forces of the United States during any of its wars;

(2) the individual received an honorable discharge;

(3) the individual is disabled with a service connected disability of ten percent (10%) or more; and

(4) the individual's disability is evidenced by:

(A) a pension certificate, an award of compensation, or a disability compensation check issued by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs; or

(B) a certificate of eligibility issued to the individual by the Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs after that Department has determined that the individual's disability qualifies the individual to receive a deduction under this section.

The surviving spouse of an individual may receive the deduction provided by this section if the individual would qualify for the deduction if the individual were alive.

One who receives the deduction provided by this section may not receive the deduction provided by section 16 of this chapter. However, the individual may receive any other property tax deduction that the individual is entitled to by law.

Tax code 3 will now be \$37,440 off the assessed value of the real property, and tax code 3 is for those individuals qualifying for both tax code 1 and tax code 2.

Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs Annual Training Conference

The Annual Training Conference of the Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs will be at the Holiday Inn Select North (by the Pyramids) on the north side of Indianapolis, June 7 through June 10, 2004. All County Service Officers are

required to attend the Annual Training Conference by State law.

The Golf Tournament will be on Monday, June 7th, at Saddlebrook Golf Course. The details on the Golf Tournament and registration information for the Hotel will be mailed out the first week in April. Please get your registration back to the hotel as soon as possible as they are renovating the facility and need the information to ensure things go smoothly.

State Approving Agency Lists New Programs

The State Approving Agency Division of the Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs is responsible, among other things, for approving apprenticeship programs in businesses that have them so that GI Bill funds can be paid to veterans who are in those programs. These funds are used to offset the differential between the pay the veteran gets as a trainee and what the veteran will get after completion of the training.

Listed below are the programs that have been authorized in the last 3 months. For a more complete listing go to www.in.gov/veteran and see the Directory of Approved Programs under the State Approving Agency button.

The high schools listed are those with approved programs to administer federal funds under Chapter 35 for students who have a parent who is 100% service-connected disabled.

Adams County EMS
Angola City Police
Avon HS
Ball Memorial Hospital - Residency Program
Chandler PD
Christan Beauty School Fort Wayne
DTE Rail Services - Clinton
Ellettsville Police Department

Express 1 Car Wash - Madison
Ideal Beauty Academy - Jeffersonville
IP Fort Wayne
Kasle Metal Processing, LLC - Jeffersonville
Lawrenceburg Police Department
Marion High School
Rushville HS
Shoals Police Department
Siver Creek HS - Sellersburg
U B Machine, Inc. - New Haven
Wells County Sheriff - Bluffton
Williamsburg Apartments - Fort Wayne



World War II Memorial Dedication- May 29, 2004

World War II veterans across the nation have a "virtual" place to meet and reconnect prior to the actual dedication of the long-awaited WWII Memorial scheduled for the 2004 Memorial Day Weekend in Washington DC. There is a new website, www.WW2memorial.org, that allows veterans to search for "buddies" or other members of their wartime units. Even before they arrive in DC for the Memorial Weekend events visitors to the website can find lists of WWII veterans' organizations. These lists will be organized by state to make location of comrades easier. There are also forums on this website where veterans and their children can exchange information with people who lived through war, and discuss what it was like to return home after serving overseas.

The www.WW2memorial.org site will also link users to chat rooms where veterans can tell their stories so that future generations might see, through the eyes and ears of actual veterans, what it was like to live through times that included rationing, FDR's radio addresses, and being shipped to lands unknown to defend our Nation. All veterans' groups across the Country are encouraged to include a link to this site so that more and more comrades of war can find each other in the easiest way possible.

Information about WWII and the different military and political decisions can also be found via links on the site. There is also information about how ordinary Americans went about their lives at home and what they did to support the war effort. The website will host an events calendar for the Memorial Day weekend so that those who visit Washington will have a chance to plan their hotel arrangements, bus tours, dining options, and any other activities.

The Smithsonian Institution, the Washington National Cathedral and different contingents of the U.S. military will participate in official events sponsored by the American Battlefield Monument Commission, who are calling the weekend's activities a "Tribute to a Generation". Organizers say that besides bringing WWII veterans together on the Mall, the dedication of the monument will serve as an important forum "to educate all generations on the importance of World War II" and how it affects our lives today.

Those who do not have access to the Internet are welcome to call Carlson Wagonlit Travel, sponsor of this website, for information or reservations for discounted airfare, hotels, and car rentals. A toll free number 800-355-1065, is available Monday through Friday 9am-5pm E.S.T.

Door Open to Apply for Death Benefit Reinstatement.

WASHINGTON (Jan. 8, 2004) - Good news for surviving spouses of veterans who died of service-related causes: A new federal law restores their death compensation as well as eligibility for home loan, education and burial benefits if they remarry after the age of 57. There is one very important catch. One must apply to the Department of Veterans Affairs to restore Dependency and Indemnity Compensation.

For those ages 57 and older and remarried prior to Jan. 1, applications must be filed not later than Dec. 31, 2004. Affected surviving spouses who remarry in 2004 and beyond should apply for DIC reinstatement right away.

The new law is the Veterans Benefits Act of 2003. President Bush signed the act into law on Dec. 16. The law allows reinstatement of DIC with no reduction in other benefits.

To learn more about DIC and how the Veterans Benefits Act affects you, call the Department of Veterans Affairs, toll free, at (800) 827-1000.

‘Sunshine Vitamin’ Shines in Colon Study

Vitamin D, cereal fiber shown to cut tumor risk;
smoking strongly linked to higher risk

PORTLAND, Ore. – In one of the most comprehensive studies to date on colon cancer risk, a team led by Veterans Affairs (VA),

National Cancer Institute, and Harvard University researchers confirmed that proper intake of cereal fiber and Vitamin D are associated with reduced risk of serious colon polyps that may lead to the disease. The study appears in the Dec. 10 *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

The study, which included more than 3,000 veterans at 13 VA medical centers, provides the most concrete evidence yet that Vitamin D - the “sunshine vitamin” - may play a role in the prevention of colorectal cancer.

“The finding that may surprise the scientific community is the Vitamin D data,” said lead investigator David Lieberman, MD, Chief of Gastroenterology at the Portland VA Medical Center and Oregon Health and Science University. “Higher levels of Vitamin D intake were associated with a lower risk of serious colon polyps. There have been some studies suggesting this, but our data are compelling.”

In the study men who consumed higher amounts of cereal fiber - more than about 4 grams per day - and Vitamin D - more than 645 international units (IUs) per day - were significantly less likely to have serious colon polyps, or tumors, which are often the precursor to cancer. Another significant association with reduced risk was the use of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs. Men who took a daily aspirin were about two-thirds as likely to have a tumor. Lieberman said further study is needed before recommending this solely for protection against colon tumors due to the potential for side effects over a lifetime of anti-inflammatory consumption. Exercise, calcium, folic acid and multivitamins were shown in the study to be marginally beneficial in lowering risk. In looking at factors that increase the risk of colon cancer, the research poses yet another reason to quit smoking. Smoking increased by nearly twofold the risk of having a tumor or benign polyps which often become cancerous. Having a close relative with colorectal cancer also elevated risk, but not as much as smoking.